

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

November 15, 2007

6:30pm – 8:30pm

New England Institute of Technology

Hall of Fame Room

2500 Post Road, Warwick, RI 02886

Meeting Minutes

Present: Denise Ahern, Ann Brockmann, Cheryl Collins, Sheila Collins, Kat Grygiel, Ralph Orleck, Robin Pacheco, Lillian Patterson, Mary Pendergast, Kellie Piche-Tatro, Walter Sage, Jane Slade, Marion Slater, Paul Stroup Jr., Sharon Terzian, Barbara Whalen.

Absent: , Deborah Ambeault, Melissa Angell, Jeff Aubin, Gloria Bussell, Maya Colontuono, Amy Canario, Barbara Chadwick, Kim Chouinard, Steven DiBiasio, Joanne Dodd Roberta Emery, Ruth Feder, Lisa Guilette, Ronald Martin, Dorothy McDonough, Richard

Moore, Jane Morein, Marty Morris, Louise Tillinghast, Kim Wilson.

RIDE attendees: Kenneth Swanson, Sally Arsenault, Greg Stewart

Visitors: Wilfred Beaudoin

Call to Order, Agenda Review, Welcome, Announcements

- **October 18, 2007 Meeting Minutes approved**

Director's Report

Ken presented two Office of Special Populations video clips, Deny No Dream and High Expectations for Each, highlighting examples of the office's marketing efforts at promoting high expectations for English language learners and children with disabilities. The new office name, Office For Diverse Learners, was announced.

Related to an update on the public comment period regarding Draft RI Regents Regulations on the Education of Children with Disabilities, there will be two additional public hearings:

- **November 26th at Davies Career and Technical School in
Lincoln, 7PM**
- **December 3rd at South Kingstown High School, 6PM**

At this time, Ken is anticipating that the Regents vote could be postponed as late as January, but will update RISEAC accordingly.

Ken reviewed and addressed all “questions to the Director” solicited from members at the September Strategic Planning Meeting.

Old Business

- **IEP Network:** A meeting was convened on November 3rd. Groups worked through sections of the draft IEP form using draft instructions and provided feedback and comments on content and workability. The IEP remains in draft form until the Regents the state regulations are finalized through Regents’ vote.

- **IEP Form:** RISEAC members expressed concerned about the dramatic changes to the IEP form and would like to have further input on the form and professional development, especially regarding familiarizing parents with the form. Members were encouraged to become involved in IEP Network Meetings and contact Barrie Grossi at RIDE with questions and concerns related to the IEP form. barrie.grossi@ride.ri.gov

- **RISEAC 2007 Strategic Plan update:** Subgroup representatives reported out on the status of the following RISEAC strategic action plans. Members who were not at the Strategic Planning Meeting were invited to join a subgroup of interest.

1) State Special Education Regulations

- o **Group’s work has been accomplished. Subgroup members**

will disband and were invited to participate in other workgroups.

2) State Performance Plan (SPP)

- o Subgroup recognized that RISEAC will rely on RIDE to stay familiar with the SPP content, and the workgroup can help to focus RISEAC's work related to the SPP.**
- o Providing support and ideas re: marketing and distributing the statewide special education parent survey will be an ongoing effort in collaboration with SEAN.**
- o RISEAC will address in response to Susan Wood's overview and presentation of an early Draft of the February 2008 SPP/APR at RISEAC's December meeting.**

3) The New Draft IEP Format

- o The strategic plan should include the goal of informing and involving parents and students of how and why the IEP form has changed.**
- o Need for broad-based and wide reaching professional development as the IEP form is adopted.**
- o It was suggested that RISEAC add "parents" to goal for this strategic action plan. Sally will revise and distribute via listserve.**

4) High School Performance Based Graduation Requirements

(PBGR)

- o Members expressed concern about students who need accommodations in completing these requirements and the disparity in how they apply from school to school. There are concerns about best practice not reaching teachers and the complexity of issues impacting implementation.**
- o Members expressed the need for professional development in districts.**
- o Ken emphasized that RIDE's position on the PBGR is that it is a test of the system and not of the students.**
- o It was reported that Roy Seitsinger and David Sienko have presented at a few LACs and may now work through SEAN to better use limited capacity. To speak to concerns about PBGR, RISEAC may ask for a presentation later in the year from Roy Seitsinger and David Sienko regarding the status of PGBR.**

5) Four-topic Plan to Plan for Advising of Unmet Needs

- o Transportation Safety Under Upcoming Statewide Plan**
 - Melissa Angell contacted the state level committee. No meetings were currently scheduled.**
 - Ken reported that his Office is at the table. Approximately 1500 students travel outside their district boundaries for special education, with multiple vehicles carrying 1-2 students to few hubs.**
 - RISEAC will look for updates from the workgroup in future meetings**
- o Needs of Students with Mental Health Issues**

--Work is ongoing

o DCYF service changes

--This is a major area. Work is ongoing.

--Not a strong focus on education.

--Some budget cuts have affected DCYF and reduced needed staff in group homes.

--DCYF's educational coordinator works closely with RIDE.

o Early Childhood Agenda

--to be determined

Members reconvened into strategic planning subgroups for further discussion and planning.

New Business

• Update on omission of Alternate Assessment Grade Span Expectations (AAGSE) on RIDE Statewide Curriculum website (to be addressed as appropriate in the next monthly meeting)

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Adjournment

RISEAC's next meeting will be held as scheduled on December 13, 2007 with presentation by Dr. Susan Wood offering an overview of, and invitation to comment on, the Draft State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report